Editorial by the Laity

Legalized Monopoly Is Plain Theft.

By Max Hirsch.

SAYS Edward Bellamy in "Equality": "Nine hundred and ninety-nine parts of the thousand of every man's produce are the result of his social inheritance and environment. It is estimated that the average daily product of a worker in America is today some $50. The product of the same man working in isolation would be probably highly estimated on the same basis of calculation at a quarter of a dollar. To whom belongs the social organism, this vast machinery of human association which enhances two hundred fold the product of every one's labor?"

Of course, the answer is that it belongs to society; that society alone produces and is alone entitled to own wealth, the small portion of wealth due to individual effort being a negligible quantity.

It is true that within any given social organization, even the most primitive, the power of every individual to produce wealth is greater than it would be were he to work in isolation. This social organization, however, is only the medium in which every member of the community works. It produces no wealth of itself. Every particle of real wealth produced has an individual author or authors.

Moreover, the social organism, the opportunity to make wealth, is naturally available to all, as much as air, light, and land. Those who produce no wealth may use it in production as much as those who do produce. Like air and light, the use made by any one of the social organism does not exclude others from making equal or greater use of it. Therefore the existence of the social organism gives no advantage to one over another; all it does is to equally enhance the wealth producing powers of all.

Using this equal opportunity as much as they like, men produce different amounts of wealth and render services of differing value, according to their innate capacities and tendencies. In doing so they benefit the community more or less according to the value of the wealth which they produce or of the services which they render. To confiscate this wealth even for the equal benefit of all would thus deprive of their just reward those who produce more than the average value in order to provide a greater than their just reward for those who produce less than the average value.

This reasoning, however, is based on the assumption that the social organism is not manipulated in favor of some as against others. When that assumption fails, as it fails wherever legal privileges in favor of some individuals have been created, equality in social opportunity is abrogated.

But, pardon me for saying it, any other form of proprietary right than that which secures wealth to him who makes it involves theft. All real wealth is made by some man or men singly or working in combination. It matters not whether the wealth consists of a flock of millions of sheep or of one grilled chop; whether it consists of acres of buildings or one little cottage; of a fleet of ocean palaces or one miserable dugout. One and all, they are the produce of the mental and physical toil of some individual man or men.

To deprive these men of the wealth made by them or which they have obtained for it or for services in fair exchange is theft, whether it is done by law—that is, by the mandate of a majority of citizens—or whether it is done by any one of them. Theft is theft, whether it is practiced by a few rich men on the many who are poor or whether by these latter upon the rich. The state has authorized certain men, through the grant of special privileges, to rob all other men. The only remedy is the abolition of the injustice. All else is mere pretense and quackery.

But, for fear of being misunderstood, I ought to say here that it by no means follows that all existing social and economic justice must or can be usefully abolished at once. Human experience shows only too clearly that, when injustice permeates social conditions, it is idle to attempt its removal otherwise than by installments. But though the road we must go is long, though it may take a long time to reach the goal, we must clearly and fully know where the goal lies before any progress can be made toward it.

In several ways privilege and legalized monopoly could be eliminated from our social conditions, with the result that economic injustice would be removed; industry would be freed from the fetters which now bind it; labor, the labor of hand and bram, would come to its own; security would take the place of constant fear, and the conflict between the morality which we preach and which we practice in daily life would be healed.

The knowledge that all are secure in the possession of equal opportunities to earn their bread; that the wealth going to each is strictly in accordance with the service which he renders to the community would cause the feeling of brotherhood to supersede that of rivalry and jealousy in regulating the conduct of men, and the time when character, ability, and learning shall be more honored than the possession of mere wealth surely would have come.

"Where Are the Houses of Yesterday?"

By Margaret Bateson.

THREE-QUARTERS of a century ago it was the ambition of every prosperous citizen to build himself a house. His dining table, the altar of ceremonious hospitality, gave two dozen people ample space to dine and gesticulate around its polished spread of mahogany. At expansive moments toward the end of the feast some small child elaborately dressed and curled would be placed on the table and invited to make her way along with the decanters to the other end without upsetting the dishes of dessert. And there was space for the performance of the feat.

These houses really held things. There were immense pictures, measuring so many feet by so many, of rich dark oils in the dining room, and fine unfettered expanses of water colors in the drawing room. And then, what splendid tables there were in these houses! There was not only that great table with many leaves dedicated to eating; but in all the sitting rooms there would be ever so many fine, spacious solid tables on which work could be done and things could be laid.

I do sigh for those tables. Of course, every one did not live in a big house. But the people who could now be living in big houses have packed themselves into small ones, and I believe they will discover one of these days that they have lost a good deal by the change. They have lost more than a certain number of feet of space; they have lost the effect upon the mind and character that a spacious life gives. We all know that people living on moors and prairies have as a rule a certain dignity that people who are much crowded lack. What the large farm or homestead does for the countryman as compared with the oft crowded villager, that the stately town house does for its inhabitants and especially for children and young people.

It makes the human being feel small by comparison with his surroundings, as the heavens and the ocean make him seem small. But it does not make him feel cheap and superfluous. The petty diminutive abode says daily to its owner: "Make haste; get out. Your room, little as it is, is wanted for others."

We all recognize some of the reasons for the crowdedness and smallness of modern town houses. We know that during the last fifty years town life has become more and more popular until at last its popularity has almost turned towards disfavor. Popularity has meant rising rents, and rising rates, and higher wages. But below such plain answers as facts and figures give there lies a deeper reason.

The old big roomed house was built on the supposition that groups of people, and especially family groups, wished continually to be in each others' society. On this supposition the rooms formed their framework. The old fashioned bedrooms tell the same story. Sisters, two or even three, used to share a bedroom, and a troublesome daughter paying a visit with her mother was thought troublesome indeed if she was not satisfied to share the four poster with her parent.

But all this community of house room proved at last too trying. Give me a place to myself, however small, was the cry that went up from sons and daughters, sisters and brothers, and even from parents, wearied with the noise of the family breakfast table and the personalities and occasional quarrels of the domestic board.

The cry has been answered by builders and hotelkeepers. We have places to ourselves, and small they are. We have diminutive flats with reception rooms that just receive a tottering little table and nothing else. We dine at a table which accommodates a baby cruet almost under protest. The narrow beds in our little bedrooms have sides, but no middle. There are no more fine pictures, only a quantity of photographs perilously edged against a narrow slat of wood.

Most modern rooms are now so miserably low that a small party cannot sit in one of them without open windows, and doors, and detestable drafts. Even the open fireplace has to be abandoned sometimes because it takes too much space. Two people cannot pass each other except by mutual arrangement. There is no room for books unless a few shelves can be suspended from the ceiling or fixed upon the top of the door frame.

And worst of all, there is not a decent table at which a person can sit with books and work at it. A drawing room may look prettier since the abolition from it of all sensible tables. But it is much less habitable. It is small wonder that people nowadays try continually to curtail the time after dinner. It is because there is nothing one can do in a drawing room. At best somebody plays the violin, or sings, at worst the pianola is set going.

What is the nonmusical person to do under the circumstances? Fall asleep probably. Possibly play bridge on the plea of sociability. At the old square table it was not easy to do either of these things. But we could read, and write, and work. The poet who wished for "an hour of crowded life" should try living now. On the score of crowdedness, if not of life, he would be well content.

Helpfulness Has Utilitarian Virtues.

By Eda May Krecker.

THERE is an old Latin phrase, "Utilitas juvandi," the advantage of aiding others. This phrase bespeaks the modern spirit. For whereas religion and altruism long have counseled the helping hand as a moral duty, our practical contemporary philosophy has deduced its utilitarian virtues. And this with increasing ease. For we are living ever nearer each other and finding each other more and more necessary to the execution of our plans.

Before we had achieved the division of labor and specialization a single man produced a watch which now requires several hundred workmen to perfect. Today each factory man learns how to make only a particular part of the machine, and without his hundred fellow workers would never find the watch completed. Towns and nations specialize in industries and need all the rest of the world to buy what they make and to supply them with what they do not make. Homes in days of old were tangles of all the handicrafts of domestic interest. But now they do little but make beds and cook. All other household labors are performed in some specialized center—the curtains cleaned in one shop, the rugs in another, the laundry done here, the dresses made there.

As our society waxes more intricate labor divisions and specializations increase. The members of the community discover that they need the others in order to complete their own lives. They cannot live to themselves alone. And they discover that those who do not help hinder. Wherever there is a drone society is impoverished by the measure of the work he might contribute were he busy. And wherever there is a poorly trained worker society loses to the degree of his inefficiency.

It has ceased to be charity to feed and clothe and warm the destitute, to educate the illiterate, to teach the incompetent. It is a matter of profit and loss. It is gain. It is utility. It is business. You suffer and your neighbor suffers because there are poor people in your town, because there are ignorant people there, because there are blunderers there. You lose by all that each of these could contribute to your comfort. Their oppressions down you and their sufferings afflict you.

Lester Ward is responsible for this idea, and he defends it in his way. Were we living the isolated lives of the primitive societies it is conceivable that we could dispense with each other and each other's cleverness, toil, and ingenuity. But in the intimately interwoven tissue of our current life every individual thread counts. And the fabric is no stronger than its weakest link. We all fall with the weak. The downtrodden members of society and their pains are our most expensive luxuries.

Were they able to work we should enjoy the products of their labors. Were they able to work well we should have the better products to relish the more. Were they able to think, devise, invent we should profit by their discoveries. And these are the most precious of all industrial products.

The innovator is the one that makes the world move. He inaugurates a change, takes things from the old ruts, forms new grooves. Without him we should still be leading the simple life simplicimus of the savage and the stone age. With him we have wireless telegraphy, and flying machines, and steam heat, and printing presses, and a number of other things equally pleasant.

And yet there are many inventions which we have voluntarily forfeited. The poet Gray has immortalized the mute, inglorious Miltons. They are innumerable. And the stifled Mozarts and Raphaels are countless, and the tongue tied, wrist bound Fultons and Faradays and Marconis and Stevensons are incalculably many. They have been born into environments which did not allow their latent genius to blossom. They have been born weeds. Luther Burbank has said that the difference between a weed and a flower is that the weed was starved and cold and poorly clad and sheltered and had cold feet and unwholesome surroundings, whereas the flower grew up in a beautiful home. He has said he could conceive no happier task than to transplant the frail, neglected weeds into happy gardens where they would transform into flowers.

And that is what society will do with its human plants. It will not tolerate weeds. It will insist upon filling the world with flowers. Already it is allowing its women to help in the world's work and already it is beginning to instruct its illiterate. The processes already set into motion can end in nothing short of the education and the enrichment of all members of the community.

Success Grows Harder in "Tech." Fields.

By John A. Howland.

CHICAGO boys are crowding into the technological and manual training departments of the public schools. This is the report of educational heads which has created some surprise. There is not room enough in the departments for the boys that in hundreds are seeking admission.

Reason for the circumstance may be found in the reaction against the classical college education. Apart from this, however, is the fact that the drift of the young man today is toward technology, out of which men have been winning such large rewards. In this present age of materialism the young man feels the invitation to material rewards for his life efforts. These are more and more the gauge of success. Within the last dozen years perhaps the world never before saw so many technically equipped men rise to higher position, influence, and money compensations.

But a note of warning reasonably may be sounded here. These men who have reached these highest positions in the last few years have been men trained in exact knowledge in their several fields. They have known how to organize and command the largest proportion of active, but untrained workers to the accomplishment of a definite, tactical end. As they have proceeded those tactics to such ends have evolved and simplified. That first tactician who may have felt his way guardedly to a first accomplishment, not only moves faster and more surely to his end, but his methods are known to others. Other men, leading, have left to the observer their methods in leadership. It may be said that in a sense these men have been standardizing methods which are standing for the best tactics in their several fields.

What is to be a first effect of all this? Does it not suggest that without radical overturning of all existing basic principles involved in these practical arts, the young man who is to be graduated tomorrow must be prepared to fall short of that gauge of success established yesterday?

In the science of "cost keeping," as it has evolved today, the managements of industrial and commercial institutions are catalogued as belonging to the nonproductive labor of these organizations. In reality, the one man in a managerial position, encouraging and directing men, may be the greatest force in active production. But he is classed by the cost keeper as nonproductive and to the extent that one man is able to manage twice or three times the number of men that he managed yesterday, he will be called upon to do so.

Machinery, too, is invading the work of the craftsman as it never has done before. Just as modern machinery displaces men, so it assumes largely the insensate management of itself. One engineer in a plant may manage machines that are doing the work of a thousand men!

If there is anything in the signs of the times respecting the number of high places that in future may be open to directing heads in organization, it points to a gradual economy for the maintenance of these nonproducers.

If this be true, those young men looking forward to results that were attained under the conditions of yesterday, may be disappointed in the attempt to reach them tomorrow. Changed conditions will have made much of this impossible. The machine, with an apprentice attendant, may have displaced a superintendent, two foremen, and half a thousand employés!

To me it seems obvious that the young man of today who is preparing for technological work on the basis of attainments of others in the past is making a mistake if his mark of accomplishment is set high, without regard to future conditions. He must prepare himself conservatively at least to be satisfied if the future shall withhold from him all that it may have seemed to promise in these last few years.

The story of the United States patent office is that for years now no new principles have been involved in applications for patent rights. There are applications of old principles to new uses, but the mine of discovery appears exhausted in the world of physics.

Talking the other day with a man of wide knowledge of physics, this authority said to me that the field of electro-chemistry by all odds appeared to him as the field out of which we might see the greatest harvest. In that domain of organic chemistry where great heat in condensed volume may open way to new discoveries, electricity is a force of greatest promise. There are needs on all sides for new things to new ends. That line in any way promising the new must be looked upon for opportunity.

Looking upon the crowding of young men into technological work it is inevitable, however, that thousands are not of the fiber—not of the capacity and initiative—to have taken place at any time in the first ranks of the successful. This always must be true of candidates for all occupations. I would be last to try to discourage one of these young men if, feeling that his talents lie in that direction, he attempts the peak of accomplishment in it. My thought in this is that a word of suggestion may be taken as timely when there are indications that there may be an undue rush on the part of young men toward a field which has not been as carefully surveyed as it might be.

The whole point of view involves that old definition of what it is that constitutes success in life. I would not attempt to dispute that thousands of men devoting themselves to the student life, delving into archæology, into the dead languages, or into any of the abstruse impracticable lines of discovery, to themselves have reached their highest ideals of success. Nor in the practical professions and arts could I fail to believe that the man, loving his work because of his love of working, has failed, even if he have only the income that gives to him the ordinary comforts of a home.

But that young man who enters the field of material accomplishments for the material riches that are promised him, must look upon himself as a failure if he doesn't attain his end.

Is he prepared for this failure in accordance with the laws of chance? Can he make the best of it, still falling far short of his ideal? He may ask himself the question—and answer it if he can.

Meddlers in Love Affairs Mar Matches.

By Helen Oldfield.

IS it anybody's business if a gentleman should choose
To wait upon a lady, if the lady don't refuse?
Or, to speak a little plainer, that the meaning all may know,
Is it anybody's business if a lady has a beau?"

It is a pity, but there are many people who, whether from contemporaneous human interest or from impertinent curiosity, manifest a great disposition to concern themselves with that which is none of their business and solely pertains to their neighbor's affairs. Especially is this noticeable when the affairs are those of the heart; nothing so much attracts these busybodies as an incipient love affair.

If Johnny Jones, on two or three successive Sunday nights, goes to church with Susy Smith; if Edwin at reception or lawn party shows a preference for the society of Angelina above that of the other damsels of their set, forthwith tongues begin to wag, an engagement is taken for granted, and knowing looks and open comment freely are indulged in, to the greater or less embarrassment of the young couple, who in all probability merely were enjoying each other's congenial society, with no ulterior purpose of matrimony in view.

If the youth is not deeply interested, or even if he is, and, as is apt to be the case, also is shy, he perhaps ceases his attentions, whereupon ill natured gossips do not hesitate to insinuate, if they do not openly assert, that he has ill treated the girl, perhaps even that he has jilted her; if, on the contrary, being in love, he has the courage of his convictions or, as rarely is the case, he has old fashioned notions of chivalry and of man's duty to woman, he may be hurried into a precipitate proposal, perhaps driven into a hasty and ill considered marriage.

It is a well known fact with gardeners that fruit and flowers, artificially forced, neither have the sweetness of flavor nor the lasting quality of those with which nature is left to deal after her own gradual process of development.

Of course, it may be said that the young folks ought not to mind a little teasing and that they are foolish to care. But sometimes the teasing is more than a little, and for the folly, is it not among the saying of sages that all men, still more all women, especially in the days of their youth, are prone to folly as sparks that fly upward?

It is, or ought to be, part of every well brought up girl's education that she has no right to regard the language of compliment as serious; none whatever to suppose that a man is in love with her until he plainly tells her so; and, above all, that he desires to marry her until by word of mouth or pen he actually asks her to be his wife. Also it ought to be among the cardinal principles of every gentleman's creed that he is a cad who makes love to any woman whom he has no intention of marrying; honor and honesty alike forbid it. The fact that the woman ought to know enough not to seriously accept badinage in all sincerity makes no difference. If our neighbor is a fool our duty to that neighbor is, so far as in us lies, to protect him, still more her, against the consequences of that folly.

Propinquity is a great and mighty, wellnigh an omnipotent, factor in matchmaking; there is no better method of furthering a marriage than to bring together two congenial unmarried people of opposite sexes and then to leave them alone. For many good and sufficient reasons, private and public, it is desirable that people should marry—"male and female created he them." It much more is desirable that they should not be in haste about it; that the twain who are to be one first shall make sure of their power to consolidate, their capacity to unite into one harmonious whole.

To this end it highly is desirable that men and women shall be able to associate one with another unhampered by the meddling of outsiders, the hindering suspicion of serious intentions upon the part of the man or desire to entrap upon that of the woman.

It is a far cry from liking to love, even though both may lie upon the same pathway, and the distance between them often is not traversed, although the probability is that it may be. The comments of people who in no way are concerned frequently render cordial friendship between men and women uncomfortable, if not impossible. The man who is not inordinately vain does not like to have it said that his woman friend is in love with him. Moreover, he is apt to fear that but for her reported engagement to himself, a rumor which the gossips persist in spreading, some other man whom quite possibly she might love and marry would woo and win her.

The woman who is capable of a genuine platonic friendship may be willing to run the gantlet of small talk so long as she and her friend thoroughly understand each other but always there is the haunting doubt as to whether he really does know that she is not in love with him. And when, as so often happens, the friendship glides into love she never can be altogether sure that her suitor is not asking her to marry him because he is in love with her but because other people have persuaded him that she expects him to do so.

Yet this situation less is to be dreaded than that vague connection, a little more than friendship, a good deal less than love, where neither quite is clear about the feelings of the other, where the woman is fettered by conventions and the man who could make matters clear is satisfied with undefined relations. It is one of the many cases in which men fail in candor to women because they dread a scene.

For the rest, it is not to be wondered at that the world at large does not believe in platonic friendship between men and women; the point in which it is at fault is that it will not leave such affairs to ripen into love or to fade and fall at leisure without interference, which almost invariably does harm rather than good.